

CLAIMS

1. A document handling machine comprising a non-secure or low security housing, a document store, a document transport for conveying documents of value in one or both directions between the document store and an opening, and a document degradation system, separate from the store, which is responsive to an unauthorised activity in relation to the machine to degrade documents in the machine.
2. A machine according to claim 1, wherein the store comprises a tray on which documents are stacked, the document degradation system being adapted to degrade documents on the tray.
3. A machine according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the document store comprises an open top tray.
4. A machine according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the unauthorised activity comprises one or both of an attempt to gain access to the interior of the machine, and an attempt to move the machine.
5. A machine according to claim 4, wherein the document degradation system comprises one or more sensors for detecting unauthorized access.
6. A machine according to claim 4, further comprising one or more sensors for detecting unauthorized access; and a controller responsive to the sensors to activate the bill degradation system.
7. A machine according to any of claims 4 to 6, wherein the degradation system can be remotely activated.
8. A machine according to any of claims 4 to 7, further comprising one or more movement sensors for detecting movement of the machine and activating the degradation system.
9. A machine according to claim 8, wherein the movement sensor(s) is adapted to detect the presence of an external electric field, the degradation system being triggered when the external electric field is reduced or absent.

10. A machine according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the machine is self-powered.
11. A machine according to the preceding claims, further including a communication system for communicating with a remote host.
12. A machine according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the document degradation system applies a dye to the document when activated.
13. A machine according to any of the preceding claims, the machine comprising one of a document dispenser, acceptor or recycler.
14. A method according to any of the preceding claims, further comprising wheels or rollers to enable the machine to be moved across a surface.
15. A machine according to any of the preceding claims, further comprising a non-secure cabinet surrounding the document store and document transport.
16. A machine according to claim 15 wherein the non-secure cabinet is made of plastics or thin sheet metal.
17. A method of providing documents of value for dispensing, the method comprising providing documents of value in a store having a document degradation system which is activated to degrade documents in the store; and mounting the store in or on a document dispenser, the dispenser being located in an area in which the store is not protected against access by unauthorised personnel, wherein the degradation system is activated in response to an unauthorised activity in relation to the store or dispenser.
18. A method according to claim 17, wherein the unauthorised activity comprises one or both of an attempt to gain access to the interior of the machine, and an attempt to move the dispenser.
19. A method according to claim 17 or claim 18, wherein the document dispenser is surrounded by a non-secure cabinet.

20. A method according to claim 19, wherein the non-secure cabinet is made of plastics or thin sheet metal.
21. A method according to any of claims 17 to 19, wherein the store comprises an open top tray.
- 5 22. A method according to any of claims 17 to 21, wherein the store is adapted to receive documents rejected as non-dispensable by the document dispenser.
23. A method according to any of claims 17 to 22, wherein the store is conveyed to the document dispenser in a non-secure manner.
- 10 24. A method according to any of claims 17 to 23, wherein the document degradation system applies a dye to the documents when activated.
25. A method according to any of claims 17 to 24, wherein the dispenser is constructed in accordance with any of claims 1 to 16.
- 15 26. A machine according to any of claims 1 to 16, the machine being located in an area in which the store is not protected against access by unauthorised personnel.
- 20 27. A method according to any of claims 17 to 25 or a machine according to claim 26, wherein the dispenser or machine is located in or adjacent a retail outlet.
28. A method according to any of claims 17 to 25, or claim 27, wherein the documents of value comprise banknotes.